Ufford PUNCH

Issue 338

March 2025

The Gen Z Issue

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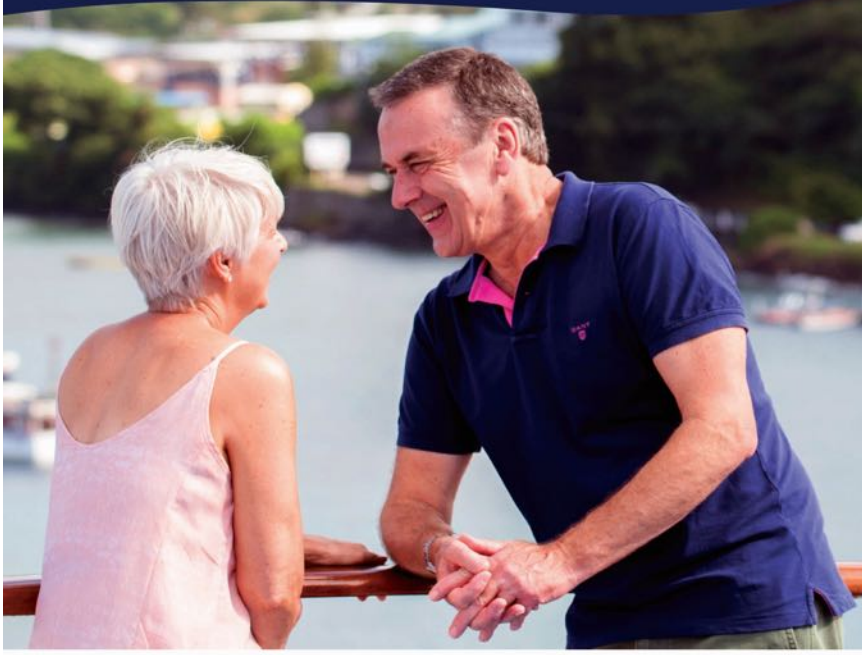

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Welcome to the Ufford PUNCH

From One of the Editors

Welcome to the March edition of the Ufford PUNCH.

You may have noticed this month's edition is looking a little different. Well that is because the editorial team have called in the young guns. Along with a collection of the youth of the village we have composed this month's edition for you.

It came as a bit of a shock to me when Andy and Tony asked us to do it. I wondered to myself whether perhaps they were feeling especially lazy this month or they had just simply run out of ideas after having to write 337 different editions. However, I like to believe they wanted a fresh insight into the village and some young blood to energise a rather boring month. Well, we attempted to take it in our stride and hopefully write some thrilling pieces for you, but also to offer you a look into parts of the village and parts of our lives you may not see.

Tom, Nell, William and I (see below) show what a night out for us looks like - whether that may be good or bad! You can read about the work Tom is doing with his open mic nights and the recent success of the village hall concert he organised. Nell recounts her recent adventures and William takes you along a journey of nature and food from a young person's perspective. Plus you have an opportunity to test your knowledge with an 'Are you down with the kids?' quiz.

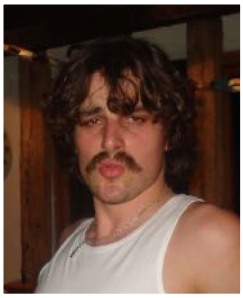
We thoroughly hope you enjoy it; it has been a pleasure writing for you. However, I imagine you won't be hearing from us again, especially since we very nearly missed the deadline to have this finished. Nonetheless, the copy has made it out and hopefully this brief introduction hasn't made you put the copy straight in the waste paper bin - but has excited you for what's inside.

Kit Thomas

KIT, 21

TOM, 20

NELL, 19


WILLIAM, 24

Front cover - William Atkinson

Have you heard it on the PUNCHLINE?

Get the latest village news first via our digital newsletter 'PUNCHLine'.

If there is anything you want to broadcast, write your message and send it in Monday - Saturday for circulation to all our subscribers as soon as possible.

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Ufford PUNCH April 2025

Deadline for submissions: 14th March 2025

UPC Ufford Parish Council News

Ufford Spring Clean

The 2025 Ufford Spring Clean will take place on Saturday 8th March, between 10.00am and 12.00pm. Please meet at the Community Hall Car Park (anytime between 9.30am and 10.00am) to collect bags. There will be a limited number of 'Grab Sticks' so please bring your own if you have one.

Please ensure you wear suitable clothing (stout shoes and High-Vis jacket/coat are essential, along with good gloves).

All bags must be returned to the Hall Car Park, for collection on Monday 10th March (please place them beside the bottle banks).

A cup of tea/coffee with a slice of cake will be served between 11.30am and 12.30pm.

If 8th is not a good day for you, please feel free to 'do your bit' in the week before. If you can't fit the litter you collect in to your domestic wheelie bins, please take it to the Community Hall Car Park (beside the bottle banks).

Melton Care Village is back on the agenda

In January, Christchurch Land and Estates (Melton) Limited contacted our Clerk, in her capacity as Clerk to Melton Parish Council, to advise that they were holding a consultation on a proposed Care Village along Yarmouth Road, next to Upper Melton Terrace. All details can be found at https://meltoncarevillage.co.uk

Ufford Parish Council only comments on development plans when they have officially been lodged with East Suffolk Council, and this case is no different. When these plans are formally published by ESC, a PUNCHLine will be released. We would encourage all residents to view the plans and make comment back to ESC. All details will be on the PUNCHLine.

We have a Community Hall Car Park Womble

A massive 'THANK YOU' to Cathy Mutton who has agreed to be the Community Hall Car Park Womble. Cathy will be sweeping around the Bottle and Clothes Banks, pushing back tree debris on to the grass and reporting anything too large to deal with. If you see Cathy please give her a 'toot' of the horn or a 'Thank you'

Annual Parish Meeting – a date for your diary

The Ufford Annual Parish Meeting will be held on Wednesday 16th April 2025, at the Community Hall on the Recreation Ground starting at 7.00pm.

Full details next month but please remember, this is not a Parish Council meeting but YOUR meeting – we look forward to seeing you there.

UFFORD PUNCH NOTICEBOARD

THE UFFORD PUNCH
OUR MAGAZINE NEEDS YOUR STORIES

Whilst you are reading the March edition of the PUNCH, work is underway on the April magazine, traditionally the first with a proper spring-like feel.

As editor of the April PUNCH, I'd like to encourage all you lovely villagers to come forward with your stories and ideas for possible inclusion.

We rely on Uffordians to keep us on the Committee informed of the stories that matter - or perhaps just submitting a picture of a cute dog …

In the famous words of cookery expert Delia Smith, that arch villain of Norwich City FC:

'Let's be 'avin you!'

Please reply to: submissions@uffordpunch.org.uk

Andy Gardner

THE UFFORD PLAYERS
'MURDER ON THE RERUN'

Tickets are still available for the Ufford play 'Murder on the Rerun' by Fred Carmichael on Friday 4th and Saturday 5th April at the Church Hall

Tickets are priced at £14.00 including Fish and Chips or £7.00 BYO

Please contact Belinda Laffling on 07557 139101 or lafflings@gmail.com

A WELCOME TO OUR NEW ADVERTISER

We would like to say a warm hello to our latest advertiser **All About Hearing**, whose advert you can view below.

We are in fact welcoming a return to the PUNCH. Local Audiologist Karen Finch previously advertised with us as The Hearing Care Centre, before selling the business in 2020. We wish Karen and her team the best of luck with their new business.

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Nell's Adventures

Almost two years ago I was given the opportunity to be part of a short film being shot in and around our very own Ufford. After months of scripts, rewrites and character work, the ridiculously talented Joanna Coates of Church Lane, Ufford directed a tantalising piece of art, filled with beauty, pain and utter brilliance.

My 17-year-old self did not quite realise the gravity of what we were creating at the time. However, after the honour of watching the completed film on the 12th January at the Riverside Theatre, it became abundantly clear that this piece of film (based on true events that happened not too far from here) was something very special, something I am exceedingly proud of.

The kind and calm atmosphere brought a sense of family, not just because I had my brother by my side supporting me through the entire process as he too starred in the film … literally as my brother! The crew were ever forgiving as the nights wore on and at 1am we were in serious need of coffee and a pick-me-up.

Oddly that pick-me-up came in the form of impromptu aerobics in the living room, a fond memory of this tiring but rewarding night.

Ever since seeing Matilda in the West End at the age of 6, I 'caught the bug' as my parents say. They did not hide the fact that the industry was harsh, but Jo believed in me in a way that I had never felt so supported or confident in my ability to act and perform. Not only this but I gained a sense of independence due to Jo's kind words and encouragement as she directed me whilst I was up in Norwich alone shooting the scenes that were personal to my character (after my brother and the other actors wrapped).

At its core (though hard-hitting), it is in my opinion a deeply moving piece and I cannot wait to see how it fares at film festivals as we move forward with it in the future. My aim is to go to university and post grad at drama school, so to already have this experience under my belt fills me with hope that this dream of mine will become a reality. I hope one day I will be able to say that this was my first step into the industry that I will one day be a part of.

Nell Atkinson

WHITE LION PUB

Lower Street, Ufford

Spring at the White Lion

We are taking bookings for our revamped Marquee for all occasions.
Please contact Andy on 07538 600986

Quiz Night - Tuesday 11th March Meal 7pm , Quiz 8pm
Open Mic Night - Thursday 13th March 7pm
St Patrick's Day Celebrations - Monday 17th March
Quiz Night - Tuesday 25th March Meal 7pm, Quiz 8pm

SAVE THE DATE: Car Rally Saturday 5th April - Cars arriving from 10am
Jazz and The Andrews Sisters Tribute in Marquee from 11:30, BBQ Food

Opening Times for March: Closed all day Monday (except evening 17th March)
Tuesday - Saturday 11am to 10:00pm Food 11am to 3pm, 6pm to 9pm
Sunday - 12noon to 9:30pm Food 12noon to 6pm

For additional information or to book a table or an event contact
Andy on 07538 600986 or 01394 460770 info@uffordwhitelion.co.uk

stephen_thurlow@hotmail.com Please reserve a table to avoid disappointment 01394 460770

Please check our website for details of our events: www.uffordwhitelion.co.uk

The 'Children' of the White Lion Pub

It is fast approaching 25 years since Stephen Thurlow purchased the White Lion pub. Stephen has always taken a strong approach to bringing young people from Ufford and the surrounding villages in to work in his establishment. We are still unsure whether this was so he could pay them the lowest wages or if he was really trying to do some good in the world. After discussing this topic with Stephen I do believe it's the latter.

Stephen estimates that he has had roughly 120 different staff members come through the pub and he has loved it, he says. 'This is more of a lifestyle than a business. I feel like I'm giving something back and a strong relationship is formed between my customers and my staff. I have now been invited to many of my ex-staff members' weddings and birthday parties. I would describe them as my surrogate children; they keep me young.' Stephen says one of his favourite parts was having many debates and intellectual (if you can call it that) conversations with them.

One of his most notable staff members is new head chef Finn Boorne who is described as a son to him. Finn joined when he was thirteen years old. Stephen did not believe Finn was going to make it in the industry and nearly fired him on many occasions. However, eight years later Finn is running the kitchen for Stephen every day. He describes working with Stephen as being 'lovely' and 'the time of his life.' There was a slight hint of sarcasm involved in this when I asked him. Stephen now says his proudest moment at the pub is when Finn received his five star rating for his first FSA hygiene inspection last month.

I later spoke to William Atkinson, one of Stephen's earlier staff members and co-editor on this month's edition of the Ufford PUNCH. He gave me this insight into his experiences: 'There's something innately connecting in working at a place as old as the White Lion. Starting as a young teenager washing pots for pocket money, you see all the older guard who came before you, and as a 20-year-old finishing my last few bar shifts (although I'll never truly be finished at the White Lion); you see the younger crowd coming to take your place. It makes you think about all the long-gone workers and publicans, feeding and watering the locals for hundreds of years, providing a space for laughter and community for generations of families and friends.'

There is something special about working at the White Lion, I joined seven years ago and somehow still haven't completely left. It sticks with you: the debates with Stephen and memories with other staff members and of course the connections you make with our wonderful customer base. So, for that we must thank the people of Ufford who have also had a part to play in our teenage years and have taught us things we will take with us into our adulthood.

Kit Thomas

Stephen Thurlow pictured left with Finn Boorne and below with Holly, Finn, Alex and Kit. Gaby Pilkington (above) worked at the pub from 2013-2018.

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Springtime for Ufford

When looking at our spring years, what do you think of? For the writers of this issue it is happening in the here and now, but for many of you readers it has been and gone! So how does living in Ufford as a young person differ between the now and the then?

I asked Lyn Goddard, who lived in Hambledon, Spring Lane what it was like to live in Ufford as a child in the 1960s. She moved here at 9, from Felixstowe, and enrolled in the village school, a place I only know as 'the house where Dinky grew vegetables'. It was in full force at that time, with three classes, and one teacher for everything. Lyn remembers being immediately identifiable to the rest of the kids as 'foreign', because her accent was completely different, an idea that may seem 'foreign' to us kids today. Nonetheless, she quickly learnt their Ufford lingo and got stuck in. Of school, Lyn remembers a time without central heating, with 'a great big coal heap out the front, because of course they had to stoke the fires'.

Hambledon, Spring Lane - 1966

Ufford School Harvest Festival - 1968

East Lane cow bridge - 1970

Family life seems rather like today's, perhaps altered only by the entrepreneurial nature of Lyn and her sisters. 'We had a little caravan in the garden which had no wheels and we used to play in. When we realised the children at school didn't have any books, we couldn't believe it. We had so many books at home, and so we made a library in the caravan. Once a week, we would open the library and charge a penny to borrow a book and a penny for a biscuit. They would all swap them over the following week'. I want a caravan library! Where can I get a caravan library?

What of the wider Suffolk? We venture out of the village almost daily these days, for work, for shopping, and for pleasure. Home feels very much like just that, somewhere we come back to in the evening to rest.

According to Lyn, a 60s Ufford was far from an evening pit stop for the people who lived here, it was self-contained and whole: with a Post Office, two pubs, a sweet shop and a church, life was right on your doorstep. 'There was a van with groceries, Cyril the grocery man, who later became the milkman. He used to pull up the drive and we would get in the back of it and go shopping!'. Most people also worked in the village, as farmers, teachers, you name it. The Chilvers, who ran the White Lion at the time, were also thatchers, even thatching Lyn's family cottage when they arrived. It really seems that you could live your whole life in the village. This is something that sadly, is less and less the case for most places, as businesses and people move out for richer prospects.

As a 12 year old I remember joining in with my first Dilly Cart Race, or jumping into the Ufford Hole in the scorching heat. For me that is summer in a nutshell, and it got me wondering what else there was to do back then. 'We were always outside' says Lyn, 'We would pick watercress and make sandwiches back at home, we would use our fishing nets and catch little minnows'. Lyn and I share a love of the first bridge you meet off East Lane, a perfect place to be on your own. 'One of our neighbours had a leaky old rowing boat; she let us take it down there and have a paddle about. One of us was rowing and the other was bailing it out!'. Sending your children out for a whole day with nothing but a sandwich and no phone seems unthinkable for the parents of today, but Lyn would often go adventuring in fields with her sisters, returning once they got hungry again. There was also of course, the harvest festival held at the school, where everybody got involved, and you can see in the photo above all the cheeky kids, happy with their bounty.

I want to thank Lyn for painting a picture, of an Ufford of a bygone day. The village we see today still has a strong community, though strong in different ways I might say. Certainly, I know my childhood growing up here has been great fun, but quite different from Lyn's time here. I think we can both agree though, that it is a very special place with very special people. **William Atkinson**

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Could I Become a Magistrate?

My father is a magistrate and I am not sure if any of my age group (and more than likely many older than us) know what that entails, so I asked him to explain. **Kit Thomas**

I have been asked to tell you a little about life as a magistrate, a role which I started in 2020 and which is as open to the younger people in our village as to the older ones.

Magistrates are volunteers who preside at Magistrates Courts, the courts which handle over 95% of all criminal cases in the English legal system, the remainder (for more serious crimes) being held principally in the Crown Courts where a judge presides and a jury decides. Other magistrates sit in the Family Courts which hear cases about children and families, such as arrangements for separated parents or adoption orders.

In the criminal Magistrates Court, three magistrates preside over the court and there is no jury. Instead, the three magistrates act as the jury. This is one of the key reasons that the magistrates are lay volunteers from the local community: it aligns with the ancient concept dating from the Magna Carta of being 'judged by one's peers' with the magistrates essentially acting as ordinary citizens judging their fellow community members.

A great effort is made to make the magistracy as representative as possible of the community. The key selection criteria are to be aged 18 to 70, to be of good character and to show five key attributes: making fair and impartial decisions, understanding different perspectives, communicating with sensitivity and respect, self-awareness, and the ability to work with other people.

It is that simple. No formal training in the law is required but magistrates are trained well to perform their role and in court have a highly qualified legal adviser (lawyer) who steers them through the complexities of the law (which are many).

A further ancient and crucial role for the magistrates is to maintain the habeas corpus principles of Magna Carta which preclude imprisonment of individuals unless fairly tried and found guilty. The law starts from the principle that anyone charged with a crime (except for the most serious such as murder and rape) is entitled to remain free 'on bail' until they are brought to court for trial. However, the magistrates must decide whether the specific circumstances of a case means that this right should be over-ridden or imposed with restrictions. For example, a person who might be expected to flee the country, commit further offences or intimidate the victim or witnesses might be held in remand (prison) until their trial or allowed to remain at home only with restrictions such as giving up their passport or being curfewed at night.

So why do I volunteer for this role? I think it is worthwhile to help to maintain a fair and effective legal system which is a core part of society that keeps us all safe and free. Then the cases and people I meet are endlessly interesting. I enjoy the challenge of living up to the oath we take: 'to do right by all manner of people … without fear or favour, affection or ill-will'.

Today the majority of magistrates are, like me, aged over 50. There is a push to recruit more younger people of any age – the youngest ever was a student appointed when she was just 19. If anyone is interested to learn more, I'd be happy to talk to you.

If you are interested in becoming a magistrate or just want to find out more head to this link.

https://magistrates.judiciary.uk/what-is-a-magistrate/

Adam Thomas

The 'Are You Down With The Kids?' Quiz - Kit Thomas

1. Who is the most subscribed YouTuber in the world?
2. What was the most played video game last year?
3. Which rapper won artist of the year at the Grammys?
4. What was the most owned car for people aged 17-20?
5. Which breakout artist released the songs Espresso and Please Please Please?
6. If someone is described as having 'good rizz' what would this mean ?
7. The video game Fortnite takes inspiration from which Japanese film?
8. If you were to be invited to a 'motive' what would you be attending?
9. Which app was recently banned for one day in America?
10. In which food establishment could you purchase the Grimace Shake?

Answers on page 20

An Insight into a Night Out for the Youth of Ufford

In this piece I will go into detail on what a common night out for the youth of Ufford consists of, the places to be, how the night begins and ends, and where to avoid. You may well have heard us leaving the village at 10:30pm after a long day's work and wondered where we could be headed at this hour.

As much as we love the White Lion and the Crown pubs, they don't always offer the right mix for a night out with friends. This means Woodbridge is the staple for a good night - with twelve pubs and a few bars, Woodbridge has plenty to offer.

Back in 2021 the Angel pub was the teenager hot spot but after some rowdy behaviour (involving fireworks) they became much stricter and now … In 2025 you will commonly find the youth in the King's Head or the renowned Ye Olde Bell and Steelyard. Kitchen Porter Tom Shaw says the 'The Old Bell is the place to be on a Friday night'.

The Old Bell has plenty to offer with a range of drinks (at some of the cheaper prices in Woodbridge), pool table, tv screens and a nice beer garden, as well as being the oldest pub in Woodbridge. Other spots, if a change of scenery is preferred, are The Anchor, which always has a good atmosphere and delicious food or The Red Lion, which often hosts karaoke nights and discos.

Before we were old enough to enter these fine establishments, we had other spots to spend our evenings, including Fen Meadow which didn't offer much in the way of facilities but provided a big space for a lot of people to hang out. This spot was especially popular during covid, of course only hanging out in groups of six. (And, heading back to Ufford for a second, the best spot of all was the field past Ufford Hole. On a warm summer's night with a group of friends and a pack of cheap ciders, there was no better place to spend your evening).

So where do you go after you've spent the first half of your night in Woodbridge? All the pubs close by eleven and you are maybe not ready for a cold walk home or an expensive taxi ride. Well, of course you hit JJ's wine bar, located above the sandwich shop. This is the only place in Woodbridge open past midnight and gets packed out around that time. JJ's stays open till three in the morning and offers a haven of expensive pints to the youth. JJ's is a cramped, hot and loud bar but when its 1am and you are sitting with friends laughing over nothing it seems like paradise. To some it is now just a dream, though, as JJ's have recently changed to admitting only ages twenty-one and above.

For an alternative late-night option, the bravest will face a late taxi ride to Ipswich to continue their evening in Revolution, pretty much Ipswich's only 'night club,' (if you can call it that). A couple of Jägerbombs (Red Bull and Jägermeister) and a kebab and you'll have an evening well spent.

On the other hand, you may be thinking you want to avoid anyone under the age of 30 on your night out in Woodbridge. Well, The Old Mariners is the place for you, located just 200 metres from the Old Bell but just a distant fantasy to the youth as it maintains a rule that only over twenty fives can enter. I have however been accepted in once and got to experience its magical beer garden; I look forward to four year's time when I can attend this wonderful establishment again.

Kit Thomas

What do the Youths Do? … They Go to Uni!

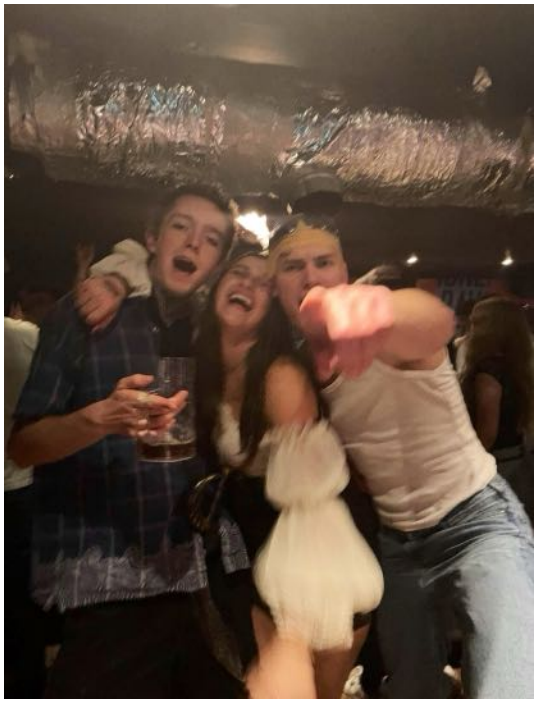
Recently I have had the privilege of visiting one of my closest friends at Sheffield University. Now to be totally transparent, until November 1st of 2024 I categorically HATED Sheffield. There were many reasons for this but mainly that my smelly older brother went there and the sad grey weather made it seem like the most miserably hilly place in the world, until I stepped into Flat 3.

Now Charlotte (the aforementioned friend) would say that she has 'primed me for University' and in many ways my first visit to 'her' Sheffield has indeed prepped me for all the very most important aspects of University - such as dancing on tables with Vin Diesel look-alikes.

This night of subversions began with what can only be described as … the circle game. In the blur and hubbub of a new rule every minute and thumbs on tables I found myself doing a not-so-inspiring interpretive dance in front of a group of strangers; they are not so strange to me anymore.

Adorned in a makeshift pirate outfit and fangs (for some reason), what followed was a night of frivolity, and scream-your-heart-out bangers whilst vigorously sloshing outrageously large pints of cheap beer. I believe I managed five of these Oktoberfest-like pints measured by the many different ways in which we said cheers.

By my count: we had one 'Salud!', a good old 'Prost!', we definitely had a 'Kanpai!' and to finish I believe we clinked glasses while yelling 'IIoniannau!' Don't ask how I managed Welsh at that time of day.



The next day I woke up and peeled a bald cap off my face, not sure how that one got there but alas the oh too familiar feeling of headache and nausea settled in and I knew I had to do something drastic in order to remedy this feeling. And so, a group of us decided the only course of action would be a baptism of fire, well, water. Launching ourselves into the icy waters of the Peak District I felt revived with a new sense of self.

'I will never do that again,' I thought to myself and smiled knowingly. I would be jumping into that cold water once again in the not-so-far-off future.

Nell Atkinson

Nell's Travels

By the time you read this article, I hope to be travelling in Vietnam. Or perhaps Laos, or maybe Thailand, and even Cambodia and Malaysia. I shall definitely be in South East Asia somewhere.

At the time of writing I am on my checklists: packing travel cubes, shower shoes, getting vaccinations and travel insurance.

I plan to meet two amazing friends in Hanoi, Vietnam at the beginning of March. Our itinerary from there is loose at best, though dictated by our modest spending cap of £30 -

£40 a day. Hopefully, that will ensure upwards of four months of adventure.

I've done my research and have a list of must-sees, with Luang Prabang, the ancient capital of Laos, being at the top - and I fancy the novelty of a sleeper train.

I have funded the trip working in a local bakery - my first full-time job; I feel very proud to have earned this adventure for myself. All that's left to see is just how long my savings will last; wish me luck.

Nell Atkinson

Bringing Live Music to Ufford

Tom Mumford has made huge progress in bringing live music back to Ufford
and he recently organised his first gig to play in St Mary's Church Hall

First of all, I'd like to say thank you to everyone who came and supported The Pancakes and Laila Hollis in January. It was great to see so many of you there … according to the rather unofficial estimates of the sound man, over 80 people turned up to watch.

Organising this event was an incredibly rewarding experience. With a band as unique as The Pancakes, there were so many creative and fun ways to run the event. We had The Pancake World Tour T-Shirts worn by the bar staff, a Crazy Finger Cocktail (named after one of their songs), and a giant pumpkin on stage, provided by The Pancakes for reasons I am still unsure of … but anyway! It was a lot of fun.

I'd also like to suggest that this event broke a few Ufford World Records. The main one being the largest sound and mixing desk ever seen in the history of Ufford. Andy Gardner may need to up his game for his next event in the village hall!

After the success of this event, I'm already thinking of more musicians to bring to St Mary's Hall. The atmosphere in the hall was really special and the number of people that supported the event, from Ufford and further afield was great to see. The event would not have been the success it was without the support from many people within the village, so thank you once again.

According to one anonymous reviewer on Eventbrite, The Pancakes in Ufford was a 5 star event. It's fair to say, if you weren't there … you missed out.

If you'd like to stay updated with the events I organise, I have a mailing list. Please visit www.spotlight-music.co.uk and enter your email.

Tom Mumford

Photos courtesy of Grace Wells
- left Laila Hollis and above The Pancakes

Bringing Live Music to Ufford

The monthly open mic at the White Lion goes from strength to strength, Tom gives an update on what's been occurring

The Ufford Open Mic has grown to be a favourite within the local open mic community, and as we approach the second year of running the event, it feels about time for an annual review.

This was the first Open Mic I started. As an avid open mic goer myself, playing at multiple venues every week around Suffolk, I decided it was time my home village had its own. After a very brief chat with Andy Jarrett, we were ready to go.

Since starting this open mic, some incredible acts have graced the humble stage at The White Lion. We've had professional musicians from London, up and coming songwriters, father and son duets, a guitarist from Taiwan, improvised jam nights and much more.

However, out of all these acts, the most memorable performance is still Kit and Andy's rendition of Fairytale of New York. Although Kit has played at the open mic many times since, often putting together impromptu bands (consisting of slightly unwilling bar staff), the audiences of Ufford are still awaiting a second performance from Andy. Maybe next Christmas we'll have our luck.

Photos - thanks to Chris Clayton of Clayton Photography

In the summer months, the open mic attracted crowds that even filled out the whole marquee. The huge stage was much loved by the musicians who suddenly felt like they were closer to playing at Wembley than the local open mic night. As far as I'm aware, no other local open mic has an indoor and outdoor stage - how lucky we are!

Since I took on this open mic, I have been approached by multiple pubs across Suffolk and I now run five every month. From hobbyist musicians to professional songwriters, there is an endless supply of talent in this area and new faces still turn up to play at the open mics.

Although often overlooked, open mics play a vital role in the local music scene. Almost every musician starts their performing journey at an open mic, and even if they go on to gig professionally, they keep coming back to play.

I hope to see you at the next Ufford Open Mic.

Tom Mumford

Rare Days

You're twenty-something and tired of stepping out of your house and seeing the same scene: the same trees, same houses, same sky. You tie your laces tight and set out into the world, in search of greater beauty. For some it's the nearest city, for some it's the other side of the world. If you've been taking the last few PUNCHES, then you'll know I chose Japan. I saw wondrous things in my year there, things I may share another time if you can bear any more of it, but here I wanted to share a feeling, something that grew the longer I was away - 'I could swear we have something like this at home …'. The more I saw, the more I was convinced that I had been missing the point, that there were things I ought to really 'see' on my return.

If you ask me, there is an indelible mark left on the soles of your feet from the moment you run out barefoot as a child. It follows you as sure as the tread of your boot, and like a tread it guides you back home when you need. For many of us this mark is Suffolk, and it's here in Ufford that I've been looking for the footprints of nature I used to love so much as a child.

A 'Rare Day' is a phrase I've coined (it's fine you can use it), to describe those wonderful moments when the regular rhythms of nature forget themselves, and you instead find yourself amidst an enchanting blend of seasons: hot rain in the middle of August; or perhaps a thick winter fog choked with bright sunlight. This October, I came across such a day. The weather had been relentlessly soggy all week, with rain and cloud filling every nook of mind and meadow. But Lo! Much to mine and the shepherds' delight the heavens relented, and the next morning the sun shone on a glistening Ufford. Nothing for it but to go on a walk, so my girlfriend and I went toward the low fields between Ufford and Eyke.

There we started to traipse deeper and deeper into sodden pastures. Eventually we decided there was little use in getting our shoes wet too – so off they came. Boots in hand we trudged through the saturated fields, ducked through the mud under the railway, and entered the narrow footpath between hedge and river.

As we teased our way through nettles and dried cow parsley, warm sun breached through passing trees and fell on our faces. Eventually the path opened, onto a small bridge under which water lavishly flowed. Turning outward just as we made it onto the bridge, we could take full stock of where we were. It marked the corner of several fields, and though closed on each side by hedges and scrub, from right here we could see the expanse of each.

Clear pools of fresh water crept over each field in lazy arcs away from the river. Like shimmering mirrors they reflected a sky splashed with small clouds, regimented as checkers and gently moving across the sky. The pools - lit brightly by a dazzling sun - hid nothing, and lush green grass swayed softly beneath.

All of this took us by immediate joy, and it came to us that this was what we came for. We sat down and watched as the nature we had overlooked for so long continued its dance around us. Cows called out across the still pools and clouds periodically shaded us from the sun, making its return all the warmer. Plump mallards inspected the new real estate with eager beaks, and from the horizon flocks of herring gulls and arrows of geese flew down to join them.

It was at this beautiful in-rush of wings I began to wonder. These birds I see in front of me don't see plots of land or designated bathing zones. They see a breathing changing landscape. Across counties and countries, they follow the ebb and flow of water like a web across our countryside. Never had I felt more envious of a flock of birds living their life than at this moment. We have all dreamt of flying at least once, I'm sure. Simultaneously however, I feared for them. Eight percent of new developments are built on floodplains across the UK, and great swathes of wetland forest rich in life is already long gone. I have been trying to find the nature of my childhood, but as it is with many people my age it is disappearing before my eyes. And it will be sad, I think, when a Rare Day becomes any when you can see a flock of birds flying across the sky.

We left the bridge and set further into the walk. The pools had been warmed in the hours we had sat, and it was a joy to be held by the soft grass, now grateful for the mud between our toes. We left the cows and the birds behind in their flash flood paradise, and in time turned up a hill to look over it all. It was almost as idyllic up here as down below, but now we could see the roads and the houses that separated each area, the grooves of civilisation that form our homes but in time can isolate and destroy theirs.

And I think to myself: I don't want any more to disappear. I don't want my children reminiscing about a ladybird that they saw fleetingly or being surprised by the sight of a family of ducks. I want them to know that we did something to help our nature, and I want them to be surrounded by it.

William Atkinson

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Sour Chicken Recipe

William Whisk here, providing you with glorious new food to try at home. During my interloping I became accustomed with all manner of new and exciting flavours – which of course I had to try myself! Here is a recipe for a sweet and sour chicken that I came up with during the depths of winter on the Katsuragawa river of Kyoto (Does that make it sound better?). It's warming, sumptuous and very scoffable. And I always feel that if you've got the time then give it time, it will taste so much better. I've given replacements for the ingredients that might be harder to come by, but I'm sure it will be just as delicious. Itadakimasu!

Sweet and Sour Chicken
Serves 2
Ingredients:

- One white onion
- One large spring onion, or one leek
- One large aubergine
- One chicken breast, skin on
- One can of cannelloni beans (or your choice)
- 3 cloves of black garlic, or sub with regular garlic
- A level tablespoon of sugar
- A few dashes of soy sauce
- Cup of apple cider vinegar or white wine vinegar
- A few dashes of sweet vinegar (e.g blackberry, elderberry), or sub with a little more sugar
- Handful of desiccated coconut
- Mirin wine a generous pour, or sub with white wine

Method:

1. Season, then sear chicken skin down in a hot pan with oil
2. When browned and sealed but not fully cooked, remove chicken and replace with finely diced onion, thick slices of spring onion and roughly diced aubergine. Salt, vinegar and water it until softened and caramelised. Cook your rice in the meantime.
3. Add your desiccated coconut, sweet vinegar, black garlic, wine, soy sauce, then beans allowing to soften further. Be generous with the vinegar.
4. Once bubbling, add half a cup of water, the sugar, and the chicken breast, cubed.
5. Allow to reduce slightly, add another dash of coconut, and serve over rice. ENJOY

Another Day, Another Temporary Traffic Light

William Whinge here, grumbling about the gas works so that you don't have to. For the last month (at least) we've had a collection of tedious traffic lights making their way along the High Street toward Wickham Market.

Since the works' announcement last year there has been reasonable worry from long standing businesses along the road such as the Ufford Crown or KPM, about how it might affect their business. Further worry comes from residents, about how it could clog the normally quiet streets of Ufford. All for important rejuvenation of the mains gas line certainly, but perhaps still a pain in the proverbial. So how has it actually been?

As a member of the parish council, Tig reasons that Cadent Gas has been quite flexible with their work, and it could have been a lot worse.

The original plans to completely close the roads were appealed against by the council, and though the company had no obligation to honour this, they chose to keep the road open on a running works instead. So, it could have been a lot worse – we can still drive through after all! They even stopped for the busy Christmas period so that businesses in need could get the customers they usually would.

Meanwhile another resident, Stefan, reflects on the surrender to it all: 'They've become an inevitable fact of life, like death and taxes. You know that when you leave Ufford you will do so haltingly'. As I write this, I realise that perhaps I am the only one still complaining here – All in all life goes on, as do the traffic lights. I'll go grumble in my cavern.

William Atkinson

From the Garden to the Heart

We welcome back Nikk Slowey, Instructor in Horticulture at Suffolk Rural College, Otley
as one of our quarterly contributors to the Garden Notes section

As the seasons shift, the quiet beauty of our village gardens becomes more evident than ever. It's a reminder that nature, in all its splendour, is an ever-present part of our lives.

The Healing Power of Gardens

Gardens are not just about growing flowers and vegetables. They hold immense value for our mental and physical health. Research has shown that spending time in nature reduces stress, boosts mood, and even enhances cognitive function. Whether you're tending to a vegetable patch or simply sitting on a garden bench, nature has a remarkable way of grounding us and offering a peaceful escape from the hustle and bustle of everyday life.

Community Connections Through Horticulture.

One of the most rewarding aspects of gardening for me is the way it brings people together. Whether through a shared garden project or simply swapping plants and gardening advice, horticulture is a wonderful way to connect with others. I've seen firsthand how garden clubs, school projects, and local initiatives can foster a sense of belonging and community spirit and my time teaching the horticulturalists of the future never seems wasted.

Practical Gardening Skills

In my winter lessons, I've had the pleasure of guiding students through a range of practical gardening tasks. Here are just a few of the things we've worked on recently:

Pruning for Winter Colour: This task not only helps maintain the health of plants but also ensures that the garden retains vibrant colour during the colder months. We've focused on pruning deciduous shrubs such as Dogwood to promote strong growth and maximise the impact of their colourful winter stems next season.

Laying a Patio: A great skill for anyone looking to enhance their garden with functional outdoor spaces. I've taught how to properly prepare the base, lay slabs, and ensure the patio is both aesthetically pleasing and practical.

Hedge and Tree Planting: Proper planting techniques for hedges and trees are crucial to their long-term health and structure. We've covered the best methods for planting in different soil types, spacing for growth, and the benefits of planting native species.

Applying Solid Fertiliser: Using solid fertiliser correctly can give your garden a significant boost. I've shared tips on when and how to apply it, ensuring that your plants get the nutrients they need for healthy growth.

Single Digging: Something I never thought this lover of no dig gardening would ever have to preach about! This old-fashioned technique is said to be a wonderful way to improve soil structure and drainage. We've explored how single digging can help aerate the soil, allowing roots to establish more effectively, which is key to healthier plants and better yield, and I wouldn't be doing my beliefs justice if I didn't also mention the damage to the soil structure and microbial relationships within it digging causes. I must learn to 'sit on the fence' more effectively.

These tasks, while simple in principle, provide the foundation for a thriving garden and as we head into the warmer months, I encourage you to spend time in your garden, try out new plants, or even experiment with a new gardening technique. Whether you have a tiny yard or a country estate, every space can become a sanctuary for both you and biodiversity.

The 'Are You Down With The Kids?' Quiz Answers

1. MrBeast
2. Fortnite
3. Kendrick Lamar
4. Ford Fiesta
5. Sabrina Carpenter
6. To be good at flirting
7. Battle Royale
8. A party or gathering
9. Tiktok
10. McDonald's

Nature Notes by Chris Reading (christopher.reading@icloud.com)

Last month I featured the goldfinch, a pretty bird and regular garden visitor. This month I focus on my favourite finch: the hawfinch, also pretty but much rarer. This is an orange-brown finch about the size of a chubby starling.

Photo: Courtesy of John Richardson

The hawfinch's distinctive feature is its massive beak, capable of cracking open the kernels of hard-stoned fruit, like cherries and plums. Their diet consists of seeds, fruit, buds, shoots, and invertebrates such as beetles. They are particularly fond of hard seeds from trees, especially cherry and hornbeam.

One of the first things I planted in our garden at Croft Cottage was a hornbeam sapling because I like them but also in the hope that one day the mature tree might attract hawfinches. They are red listed in the UK with a population of fewer than a thousand breeding pairs. In the winter, numbers are boosted by visitors from northern Europe. Their breeding range is restricted to disparate sites in England and Wales. They nest in mature woodland and have a strong flocking instinct. If you see one, it is likely there will be others nearby. The last hawfinches I saw were in Thetford Forest.

Note: If you haven't already done so, now is the time to clean up your nest boxes in readiness for the new breeding season.

Nature Knowledge: Bats are fascinating animals, the only true flying mammal. There are over 1,400 species of bats worldwide and more are being discovered. We have 18 species of bat in the UK, of which 17 are known to be breeding – that's almost a quarter of our mammal species. Bats do not make nests but roost in various places: some roost in houses – behind hanging tiles or boarding – others prefer hollow trees or caves. At this time of year, they will be emerging from their winter hibernation, so keep your eyes peeled at dusk and you might see one.

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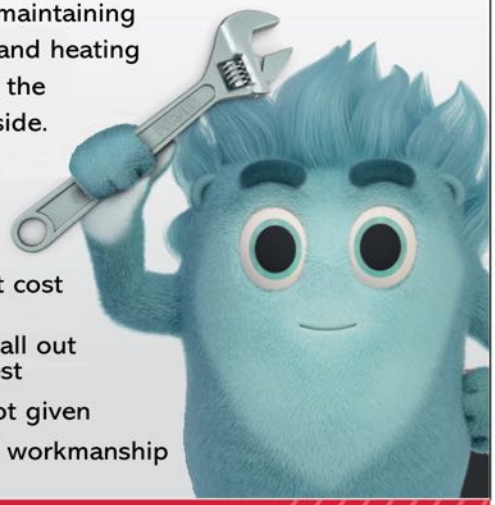

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UFFORD DIARY DATES FOR MARCH

EVENTS

4th March (Tue)	Shrove Tuesday	
10th March (Mon)	Friends of Parklands Wood - Working Party 9.00am	UCH
11th March (Tue)	White Lion Quiz Night - Food from 7.00pm, Quiz at 8.00pm	
12th March (Wed)	Ufford Coffee Morning 10.00am to 12.00 noon	UCH
13th March (Thu)	White Lion Open Mic Night 7.00pm	
18th March (Tue)	Ufford Parish Council - Meeting 7.00pm	UCH
24th March (Mon)	Friends of Parklands Wood - Working Party 9.00am	UCH
25th March (Tue)	White Lion Quiz Night - Food from 7.00pm, Quiz at 8.00pm	
26th March (Wed)	Ufford Gardening Club Talk - 'Hellebores' 7.30pm	UCH
30th March (Sun)	Mothering Sunday	

CLASSES AND CLUBS

Tai Chi Classes	Mondays at 2.15pm	UCH
Tennis Club	Mondays and Fridays from 5.00pm	UCH
Carpet Bowls	Tuesdays at 2.00pm	UCH
Crocodile Rock	Tuesdays 9.45am - 10.45am and 11.15am - 12.00 noon	UCH
Ufford Bell Ringers	Tuesdays 7.30pm - 9.00pm	
Happy Babies	Thursdays 9.30am -10.30am and 11.00am - 12.00 noon	UCH

BRIDGE CLUBS

Ufford Friendly Bridge Club
Mondays 6.30pm **UCH**

U2 Bridge Club
Wednesday 12th and 26th March - 1.45pm **UCH**

WHERE?

SMPH **St Mary's Parish Hall**

UCH **Ufford Community Hall**

The PUNCH Directory

Schedule of events and classes are on the diary dates above

Boules (by tennis court - UCH)
Di Fulcher 01394 460551

Bridge Classes
Mike Fisher
www.mikefisherbridge.com

Carpet Bowls
Di Fulcher 01394 460551

Community Hall
bookings.uch@gmail.com

Crocodile Rock
crocodilerock.music@gmail.com

Cycle Club
Stephen Thurlow 01394 460770

Deben Probus Club
John Hickling 01728 746322
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Friends of Parklands Wood
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www.ufford.suffolk.cloud

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PUNCHLine
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Tennis Club
Chris Cage 01394 461082

U2 Bridge Club
Adrian Smith 01394 461179

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Jenny Searle 01394 460317

Ufford Arts Festival
Jeremy Eyres 07739 330398

Ufford Basketball Club
Daniel Metz
uffordbasketball@gmail.com

Ufford Bell Ringers
Kate Eagle 07765 252515
kate.eagle1@gmail.com

Ufford Friendly Bridge Club
Lyn Taylor 01394 460253

Ufford Gardening Club
Sheila Creswick 01394 547658
sheila@creswick.uk
www.uffordgardeningclub.org.uk

Ufford Players Theatre
Jackie Wilks 01423 333167

Ufford Tai-Chi
Ray Norris 01394 383076
www.suffolktaichiacademy.uk

Ufford PUNCH
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secretary@uffordpunch.org.uk

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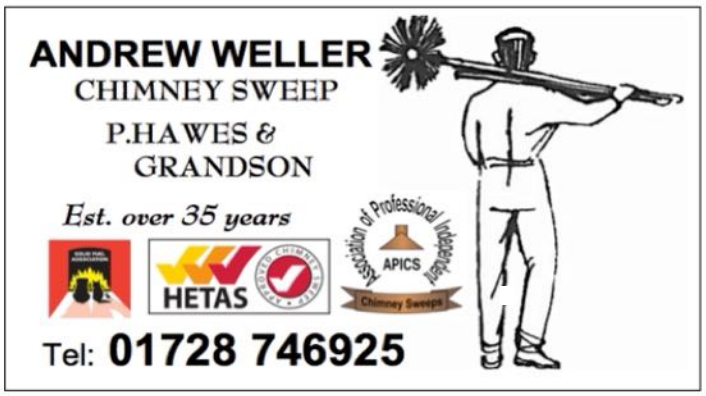
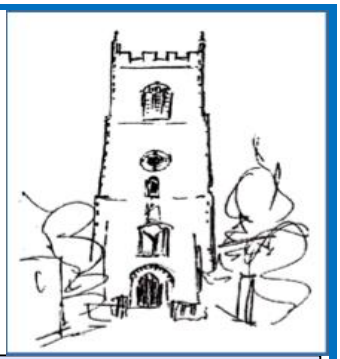


ST. MARY OF THE ASSUMPTION, UFFORD

(United Benefice with St. Andrew's Church, Melton)

Rector of Melton & Ufford: Rev. Paul Hambling
Church Office: St. Andrew's Church, Station Road, Melton, Woodbridge IP12 1PX T: 01394 387491
Church Wardens of Ufford: Karen Eyres T: 01394 460455
David Perfect T: 01394 460363



Bishop Martin retired on Friday 28th February and hundreds of well-wishers attended a farewell service in St Edmundsbury Cathedral to mark his retirement. Bishop Martin said: ' I leave with a host of treasured memories and friendships that will last the rest of my life. So, I thank the people of Suffolk for their welcome in 2015, their support and their passion for the Church in the intervening years and warm wishes for my retirement'

Bishop Martin had overall responsibility for the Church of England in Suffolk, covering nearly 480 churches and 87 church schools, serving 631,000 people. He has been committed to increasing the number of clergy in Suffolk and not closing churches and has seen a rise in church attendance, particularly among young people. Bishop Martin has adopted a proactive stance in Suffolk with the aim of developing the church's influence in communities at a grassroots level which led to support for top-up shops and food banks housed on church premises to support families.

During his time in Suffolk, he also undertook pilgrimages walking 70 – 80 miles to meet local people from all walks of life and understand the challenges faced by them.

Bishop Martin was particularly proud of the diocese's long-established link with Kagera in Tanzania. Bishop Darlington Bendankeha of Kagera said: 'He has shown commitment in strengthening this partnership and his work will continue to speak loudly in our daily lives'. Bishop Martin will be remembered as a man of God who worked tirelessly for the church and community within and beyond the UK.

Worship at Ufford & Melton

Everyone welcome at all Services

March

Sun 2nd Next before Lent
08.00 am Holy Communion BCP at Melton
10.00 am Parish Eucharist at Ufford
10.00 am Morning Worship at Melton

Wednesday 5th Ash Wednesday
10.00 am Sung Eucharist at Melton
7pm Sung Eucharist at Ufford

Sunday 9th Lent 1
08.00 am Holy Communion BCP at Ufford
10.00 am Eucharist at Melton

Sunday 16th Lent 2
08.00 am Holy Communion BCP at Melton
10.00 am Parish Eucharist at Ufford
10.00 am Morning Worship at Melton

Sunday 23rd Lent 3
08.00 am Holy Communion BCP at Ufford
10.00 am Eucharist at Melton

Sunday 30th Mothering Sunday
10.00 am Mothering Sunday Service at Ufford
10.00 am Mothering Sunday Service at Melton

LIVE CHURCH CALENDAR
www.uffordchurch.org

Food Bank donations welcome to the 'Little Pantry 'at St Andrew's Church, Melton with a collection Box in Ufford Church porch.

Thank you. **Jenny Searle**

ADVANCE WARNING!

Work will be starting on St Mary's Church roof and vestry in mid-March which may restrict some of the paths crossing the churchyard. Please take care when walking near the church.

Online prayer resources:

https://pray-as-you-go.org/home/
https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/join-us-service-daily-prayer

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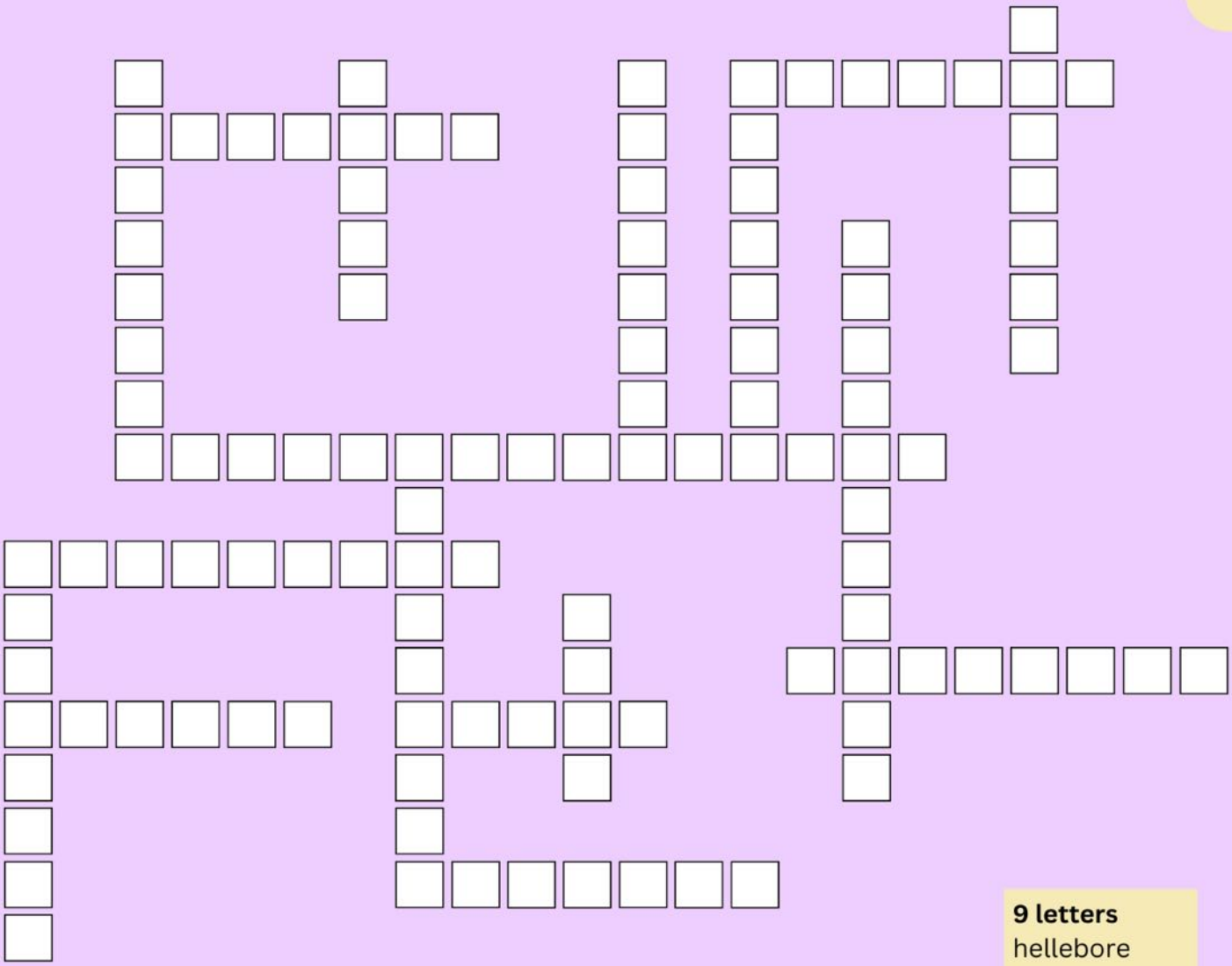

4 letters
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5 letters
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gorse

6 letters
crocus

7 letters
aconite
blossom
anemone
cowslip

8 letters
bluebell
daffodil
snowdrop
primrose
hyacinth

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11 letters
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Sunday 30th March

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Sunday Lunch & Afternoon Tea

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